

Notice of Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications

Issued by the Dental Council pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

Orthodontic Auxiliaries

Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice

The scope of practice for orthodontic auxiliaries is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope of Practice for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council.

Orthodontic auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with an orthodontic auxiliary’s approved training, experience and competence.

Orthodontic auxiliaries practise to a treatment plan prepared by a dentist or orthodontist for the patient concerned. Orthodontic auxiliaries practise under the direct supervision of a dentist or orthodontist who is present on the premises at which the work is carried out. The dentist or orthodontist is responsible for the patient’s overall clinical care outcomes.¹

Orthodontic auxiliaries assist the dentist or orthodontist in implementing orthodontic treatment through performing such orthodontic procedures as taking impressions and making study models, inserting and removing some orthodontic appliances, preparing teeth for bonding, removing bonding composite and banding cement and providing oral health education and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances.

Detailed Scope of Practice for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice

Orthodontic Auxiliary practice involves:

- Taking clinical photographs for records
- Taking impressions. Obtaining a record of occlusal relationships
- Tracing cephalometric radiographs
- Placing separators
- Sizing of metal bands and their cementation including loose bands during treatment
- Supragingival polishing of teeth (as part of oral hygiene, before bonding and after removal of fixed attachments)
- Preparation of teeth for the bonding of fixed attachments and fixed retainers
- Indirect bonding of brackets as set up by the orthodontist

¹ Further detail on the working relationship between orthodontic auxiliaries and dentists/orthodontists will be set out in the relevant Dental Council Code of Practice.

- Providing oral hygiene instruction and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances
- Placing archwires as formed by the orthodontist when necessary and replacing ligatures /closing self ligating brackets
- Removing archwires after removing elastomeric or wire ligatures, or opening self ligating brackets
- Removing fixed orthodontic attachments and retainers
- Removing adhesives after the removal of fixed attachments using burs in slow speed handpieces where there is minimal potential for the removal of enamel
- Trial fitting of removable appliances. This does not include activation
- Fitting of passive removable retainers
- Bonding preformed fixed retainers
- Making study models, and fabricating retainers, and undertaking other simple laboratory procedures of an orthodontic nature
- Taking intra-oral and extra-oral radiographs.

Prescribed Qualifications

- Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, Academy of Orthodontic Assisting; possession of a dental therapy, dental hygiene or dentistry qualification and approved experience in the provision of orthodontic auxiliary services under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency².
- Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, New Zealand Association of Orthodontists: Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Programme³.
- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice.
- Bachelor of Health Science in Oral Health, Auckland University of Technology conferred from 2011, and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice.
- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago conferred from 2002, and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice.
- Diploma in Dental Hygiene, University of Otago conferred from 2002, and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice, and Dental Council approved course for Extra-oral Radiography.

² The Dental Council approved this prescribed qualification on 10 July 2006.

³ The Dental Council approved this prescribed qualification on 15 February 2010.